

READING COMPREHENSION MAZE

WHAT:

A maze reading assessment is a task that measures how well students understand text they read silently. The maze task differs from traditional comprehension in that it is based completely on the text. After the first sentence, every seventh word in the passage is replaced with the correct word and two distracters. Students choose the word from among the three choices that fits best with the rest of the passage.

WHY:

Capable readers understand the syntax of what they read and the meanings of the words as they are used in the text. Some students with reading difficulties can't comprehend what they read well enough to choose words based on semantic and syntactic accuracy. A maze reading assessment can identify these students and measure changes in their reading behaviors as the result of instruction or practice.

HOW:

Students read one passage that has been modified in a specific way. The first sentence of the passage is left intact to provide a meaningful start to the reading. For the rest of the passage, every seventh word is replaced with parentheses in which are found the correct word from the passage and two distracters arranged randomly. The student circles one word within the parentheses that makes sense with the rest of the passage.

Neither of the distracters maintains the meaning of the passage. One is a near distracter that is the same part of speech or otherwise resembles the correct word. The other is a far distracter that is chosen randomly from a pool of words that are comparable to the words in the passage.

The length of the passages varies from around 150-400 words; the passage is chosen depending on the grade placement or reading ability of the student. The student has three minutes to complete the task (reading the passage). The student's score is the number of correct words circled in three minutes.